

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

DATCP's Producer Led Watershed Protection Grant Program

How many producers are needed to make up a producer led group?

At least five producers that operate eligible farms.

What is an "eligible farm"?

DEFINITION. In this section, "eligible farm" means a farm that produced at least \$6,000 in gross farm revenues during the taxable year preceding the year in which a petition is filed requesting the department to designate an area in which the farm is located as an agricultural enterprise area or a total of at least \$18,000 in gross farm revenues during the 3 taxable years preceding the year in which a petition is filed. This definition comes from DATCP's Farmland Preservation Program.

Can we have farm participants that do not operate "eligible farms"?

Yes, as long as you meet the minimum requirement of five eligible farms. This applies to farm and non-farm participants.

What delineates a watershed?

We are not defining the size of a watershed for these grant purposes, however, every farmer in your group must reside within the same watershed. For example, the watershed you choose to work in could be a HUC 10 (from 40 to 250,000 acres) or a HUC 12 (10 to 40,000 acres).

Additionally, limiting your groups efforts to a smaller watershed size may prove to enhance the likelihood of success in achieving watershed goals. A map will be provided on our webpage to help you determine what watershed your group resides in.

Can we collaborate with others beyond those mentioned in the Request for Proposals?

Yes, your group can collaborate with any organization or individual you feel will help group meet its goals, however, you must establish a formal collaboration with at least [one](#) of the following:

1. DATCP
2. The department of natural resources
3. A county land conservation committee
4. The University of Wisconsin-Extension or the Discovery Farms program of the University of Wisconsin-Extension.
5. A nonprofit conservation organization.

When are Request for Proposals available?

Request for Proposals will be available mid-February 2016 and will be posted on DATCP's Producer Led webpage. We anticipate that the Request for Proposals for Fiscal Year 2017 funds will be available late summer 2016.

How do groups get started?

Several organizations have created documents to help producer led groups establish themselves and be successful. For example, Julia Olmstead, coordinator of the Northwestern Wisconsin Farmer Led Watershed Council project, created a very helpful startup guide for how their farmer led councils were formed. Check it out here: <http://blogs.ces.uwex.edu/wflcp/files/2015/12/FLWC-GettingStarted.pdf>

What does a successful project look like?

Groups will likely find success by tailoring their project to fit their specific watershed improvement goals and farming needs as well as having several committed and innovative farmers involved in the project. A coordinator to organize and advance the project ideas and goals of the group can be helpful to be successful.

How do groups sustain themselves financially? Where do they get the funding?

Most groups receive funding through a diverse set of partnerships, grants and sponsorships. DATCP has put together a list of grantors that fund similar efforts or projects that producer led groups may be eligible to apply for. Another great way to get funding is to establish partnerships with your local agribusinesses.

Other recommendations?

Contact the program manager, Rachel Rushmann at rachel.rushmann@wi.gov or by phone at 608-224-4622 to discuss your project idea. She can help you evaluate your project feasibility and provide recommendations for how to increase the likelihood that your project will be approved for funding and achieve longer term success.